

Community resources

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courage is contagious

Viewing cable 08BOGOTA1267, FRENCH HOSTAGE MISSION ON HOLD DUE TO FARC \

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#08BOGOTA1267**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
08BOGOTA1267	2008-04-04 22:06	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Bogota

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.elespectador.com/wikileaks>

VZCZCXYZ0000
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBO #1267/01 0952206
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 042206Z APR 08
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2254
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION IMMEDIATE 0517
RUEHSW/AMEMBASSY BERN IMMEDIATE 1439
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA IMMEDIATE 8126
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE 0186
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA IMMEDIATE 6068
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID IMMEDIATE 0186
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE 1466
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE 1273
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO IMMEDIATE 6722
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHMFIUU/FBI WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE

148682 2008-04-04 22:06:00 08BOGOTA1267 Embassy Bogota CONFIDENTIAL VZCZCXYZ0000\
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INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION IMMEDIATE 0517\
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SIPDIS \
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/04/2018 \
TAGS: [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [PREF](#) [PHUM](#) [CASC](#) [FR](#) [SP](#) [CO](#)
SUBJECT: FRENCH HOSTAGE MISSION ON HOLD DUE TO FARC \
INTRANSIGENCE \
\
Classified By: Political Counselor John Creamer \
Reasons 1.4 (b and d) \
\
SUMMARY \
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[11](#). (C) FARC spokesman Rodrigo Granda issued a statement on \
April 3 dashing hopes the FARC would release hostage Ingrid \
Betancourt. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX told us there \
was "no possibility" the French medical mission in Bogota \
would succeed in reaching Betancourt. He added that \
President Uribe had issued instructions to fully cooperate \
with the French, since the GOC expects the French to try to \
blame it for the mission's failure. The Spanish, one of the \
three countries authorized by the GOC to work with the FARC \
on an exchange, agree that prospects for the mission's \
success are unlikely. They predicted the French will pressure \
the GOC to accept the FARC's demand for a demilitarized zone \
(despeje) if the mission fails. End summary. \
\
FARC SAYS NO TO HOSTAGE RELEASE \

[12](#). (U) The FARC's unofficial "foreign minister" Rodrigo \
Granda issued a statement on April 3 saying the FARC would \
only release its hostages as part of a formal "exchange of \
prisoners," casting doubt that a French-led mission to \
provide medical care to Ingrid Betancourt will proceed. A \
French Falcon aircraft and several medical personnel arrived \
at Bogota's military airfield on April 3, promoting \
expectations that the French had an agreement with the FARC \
to treat Betancourt. Granda ruled out further FARC \
unilateral hostage releases without "more demanding" \
guarantees from the GOC. He said Ingrid and other hostages \
were in no "worse condition than Simon Trinidad or Sonia" in \
the United States. Uribe told the press on April 4 that the \
GOC may review Granda's legal status. The GOC conditionally \
released Granda from prison in June, 2007 to facilitate \
humanitarian exchange talks. \
\
GOC PESSIMISTIC \

[13](#). (C) XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX told us April \
4 that there is "no possibility that the French medical \
mission will get anywhere near Ingrid." He said he had \
warned the French that the mission was risky, and that they \
should not send the planes. They insisted on doing so. \
XXXXXXXXXXXX said French President Nicolas Sarkozy's foreign \
policy advisor Jean David Levitte had accused him of \

violating Uribe's commitment to support the mission, because \ XXXXXXXXXXXXX spoke directly with French negotiator Noel Saez and \ suggested that the French aircraft go to Bogota, not San Jose \ de Guaviare. The French have prohibited XXXXXXXXXXXXX from \ speaking to Saez and Swiss negotiator Jean Pierre Gontard. \ XXXXXXXXXXXXX said the GOC understands the French will try to \ blame the GOC for the mission's failure. Hence, Uribe's \ instructions to cooperate fully with the French. \

SPANISH ALSO PESSIMISTIC \

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14. (C) XXXXXXXXXXXXX told us on \ April 3 that the French mission was triggered by an \ unencrypted FARC message to Gontard saying Ingrid was in bad \ health and refusing to eat. The FARC were reportedly worried \ about her condition. The French government feared that if it \ did nothing after Gontard's email, it would be exposed to \ political attack at home. He added that the French had \ discussed the mission with the FARC beforehand in \ Switzerland, and received a positive response. However, \ talking with the FARC in Switzerland was not the same as \ talking with the FARC in Colombia. The French had not \ received a green light from the FARC in the field, nor had \ the FARC in Switzerland coordinated with their colleagues. \

15. (C) Gomez said the Spanish, French, and Swiss ambassadors \ met twice with XXXXXXXXXXXXX on April 3, but were only able to \ discuss a "generic" operation, since the French did not have \ any details from the FARC. He said the operation would fail \

unless Ingrid was truly on death's door, and the FARC decided \ to free her to avoid being blamed for her death. Gomez \ noted that if the mission fails, the French would likely \ blame the GOC since it does not hold Ingrid. Still, Gomez \ said Uribe has handled the issue well by providing the French \ complete cooperation. \

16. (C) Gomez predicted the French will focus their efforts on \ pressuring Uribe to accept the FARC's demand for a despeje if \ the mission fails. France is set to assume the EU presidency \ in July, which will give it increased leverage. Still, he \ said France lacks the tools to put real pressure on Uribe to \ yield. France does not provide substantial aid to Colombia, \ and French commercial interests would resist efforts to \ involve business in a political dispute. \

BROWNFIELD \